Enclosure 4

March 1981

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CIDAC
Centro de Documentação

RESEARCH PROJECT ON TIMOR DOCUMENTATION IN MACAU

PROGRESS REPORT No. 4

TO THE NORTHERN TERRITORY UNIVERSITY PLANNING AUTHORITY

First, I must correct two (2) errors in previous reports. In Report No. 1, page 5, lines 6 and 7, in reference to the publication Arquivos de Macau, where it reads —

"* 1st series, Nov. 1929 - July 1931: 12 issues of which only 3 issues were still available;", it should read —

"* 1st series, June 1929 - July 1931: 17 issues of which only 3 issues were still available;".

In Report No. 3, page 4, line 7, where it reads — "BEDM", it should read — "BPMT".

I have already received confirmation from the NTUPA and the Timorese Culture and Information Centre of the receipt of the copies of the Timor extracts from the Boletim da Provincia de Macau e Timor (BPMT) for 1850-1868 and 1870 which I forwarded by Airmail in mid-February. In early March I forwarded copies of the following items which I would expect should reach you by the end of April by Surface Mail:-

1 envelope containing { 0 Clarim, Summary of Timor material in Port. & Eng.
0 Clarim, Photocopies of Timor material, Pt. I of II.

1 envelope containing { 0 Clarim, Photocopies of Timor material, Pt. II of II.
BPMT, 1873, Timor extracts in Port. only.

1 envelope containing { BPMT, 1871, Timor extracts in Port. w/Eng. sum./trans.
BPMT, 1872, Timor extracts in Port. only.
Os Topónimos de Timor Leste (Toponyms, after Mendes).
Nomes de Pessoas em Timor Leste (Personal Names, ").

If any of these items should fail to arrive by the end of May, I would be grateful if you could let me know about it.

I am still working my way through the BPMT, and, though I have checked through as far as the end of 1890 to note the pages for photocopying or to have short items typed out, I have only just begun typing out the short items from 1888. As mentioned in Report No. 3, the 1884 volume in both sets was in too poor a condition to be photocopied, so that task kept me busy on the typewriter for a few weeks. The 1887 volume in both sets held at the Arquivo Histórico de Macau (AHM) was in too bad a condition to be photocopied (in fact, one of them was so bad that I stopped using it, and shifted to the same year in the other set, in order to avoid damaging it), but it has been suggested that I check with the Imprensa Nacional de Macau [National Press of Macau] to see if they have that volume and if it is in a good enough condition to be photocopied, so I have only typed out the short items from 1887 for the present. The Administrator was not present when I called at the Imprensa Nacional yesterday, but I shall try again tomorrow.

The photocopier at the AHM still not giving copies suitable for my purposes, Dra. Beatriz kindly arranged that I could have photocopies of the Boletim done in the Education Department for the present. On an average, for the 1880's, I am finding Timor material on about 150 pages of each volume, and the photocopies (of those that can be done) ranging from 80 to 95.

There may be some people who have already seen or will see the excerpts that I am collecting and will, quite understandably, question the wisdom of going into such minor detail of appointments, transfers, exonerations of the constant flow of officials, so, perhaps the following extract from a report on Timor by the head of the Health Service of Macau and Timor will help them understand my reasons.

Excerpt from "Report of the Health Service of the Province of Macau and Timor relating to 1886", by José Gomes da Silva, Chief of the Health Service, Macau, 2 January 1887. BPMT, XXXIII(8):67, 24 February 1887.

> "The social life in Dilly ... is one of the elements most favourable to the discredit of the climate. Not one library, not one club, not one theatre, not one meeting-centre, not one billiards-hall, not one orchestra, not one means whatsoever for distraction of the mind. In this way, the European recently arrived in Dilly is little by little, unconsciously, fatally, led to accept the only distraction that the land offers — Making politics.
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> Making politics in Dilly is extremely easy; everything is reduced to discussing, for or against, the decisions of the local authority. Making politics is being for or against the Governor. Making politics is looking for a pretext more or less frivolous, keeping it in memory, caressing it with the mind and, at the earliest opportunity, launching it into the discussion. As a rule, one does not have long to wait for the earliest opportunity. The subject is quickly exhausted, one is urged to seek another. Of what is happening in the rest of the world, one only hears once or twice a month. Therefore, who is there to supply the craved subject, the desired pretext? The administration of the country.
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> One of the greatest obstacles to the natural progress of Timor has evidently been the lack of stability of the bureaucracy of the District. With the exception of the poorly screened soldiery and of the exiles from other colonies, who are the individuals that the state sends to stay in Dilly, as officials of the District, for more than 3 years? The Director and the Registrar of the Customs-House, the Pharmacist of the Health Staff and the missionaries. These last, however, the fathers, by their character and professional necessities, are outside of the self-entertaining society. The other officials are either temporary or indigenes. These not being able to be termed as constituting the learned of Dilly, there remains as a nucleus of it a group of three or four permanent officials and the unstable elements, temporaries of the Portuguese Colony of Timor."

Many officers of the Macau Garrison served in Timor for 2-year periods, a number of them many times. The constant "musical-chairs" of commanders of military districts within Timor is, to me, amazing, as is also the number of deaths of members of the Macau Garrison within a year of returning from duty in Timor (though I am not recording the later careers of any of these people once there is no further mention of Timor in the references).

It is a frequent thing in works that I have read about Timor, apart from the governors, missionaries, heroes and villains, to find people mentioned only by the position they hold, and I think that it is important to establish who was what, where and when. Even the exceptions mentioned above are often written of without establishing, somewhere in the text, their full names, and this can be, and has been, a cause of confusion. In some cases one might also come to be able to establish how and why. And I think that it will only be by meticulously gathering this material from the BPMT that I will get the who was what, where and when.

But there is still so much to be collected from the newspapers of the time that I have, as yet, barely glanced at. 1873 was one of the leanest years for material about Timor in the BPMT, but there is a great deal in the Press. Likewise, there is very little about Governor Alfredo de Lacerda Maia's assassination in 1887, but I understand that there is much about it in the Press.

I have recently been through the list of files received from the Serviços da Administração Civil (SAC) to which I referred in my last report. I have extracted the titles of over 250 files dealing with Timor from that, mainly from the 1870-1900 period, and I'll type up a bilingual list of that once the list of files, presently under revision, comes back to me. Meanwhile, I'll try to have a fairly good look through the files themselves. The only one that I've looked at so far is a letter from the Government of Timor, 20 June 1881, forwarding a request from the régulo of the kingdom of Veimasse (modern Vemasse), Dom Domingos de Freitas Soares, requesting that some of the leaders of the kingdom be returned from exile in Mozambique, and telling of wrongs that had been done to the kingdom by the government. The BPMT does not publish this particular letter and request, though it does carry a subsequent Royal Decree ordering that the exiles be returned to Timor, and it also has details of courts-martial (not guilty) concerning some of the wrongs suffered, including the torture (leading to death) of the previous régulo of Veimasse, Dom Manuel, and the asphyxiation of 23 of 122 prisoners placed in the hold of the Government's steamer.

Going by the titles in this list, it is not likely that there will be many documents bearing the actual signature of any of the indigenous rulers of that period, but this request by Dom Domingos does bear his signature. The main problem is that there is writing on both sides of the leaf and each shows through on the other side, making reading very difficult.

Does anyone know a simple solution to reading such material without doing anything which might damage the original? Particular types of light or screens? Angles? I'd welcome any information.

I no longer have the ready access that I previously had to the use of a photocopier. O Clarim recently shifted to premises owned and mostly occupied by a printing firm, and the premises are locked, shuttered and grilled outside of business hours, whereas I had a key for their previous premises and could go in at any time over the weekend or in the evening. Therefore, unless I am able to make other arrangements, I shall have to do my photocopying during their business hours (thus losing time in the Arquivo), using paper that I have bought myself; have it done commercially (which is much more expensive); or eliminate sending duplicates of the material to the NTUPA and the Timorese Culture and Information Centre while I am still in Macau, and just hope that my originals all reach Darwin safely (which they probably will).

I have spoken with the parish priest at the Church of St. Laurence about the complete set of the Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau held there, but I haven't gone any further with it yet. Given the present situation as far as photocopying is concerned, it will probably be best for me to arrange for photocopies of as many relevant pages as possible from the incomplete set at the AHM, try to make up the rest from the incomplete set in the Diocesan Archives, but still get around to inspecting the one at St. Laurence's in order to see if it is indeed complete and in good condition with a view to recommending microfilming.

But first, I shall have to take time off from the BPMT in order to check what copies the Diocesan Archives hold of Seara, the ecclesiastical bulletin of the Diocese of Dili. This is as a result of having just received a letter from Miss Joyce Wright, Head, South/Southeast Asia Collection, University of Hawaii at Manoa, informing me of progress with locating copies of Seara with a view to having it microfilmed for SEAM (Southeast Asia Microforms). In case you are not familiar with SEAM, I shall quote from one of the accompanying copies she sent me of correspondence to others:-

"SEAM (Southeast Asia Microforms) ... is a cooperative program of several libraries with Southeast Asia collections (among them the Library of Congress, Cornell University Library and those of the Universities of California, Hawaii, and Michigan). Its purpose is to acquire for its institutional members microfilms of books, newspapers, journals, and archival materials which relate to Southeast Asia and which are not widely held, are very specialized or difficult of access for scholars and other researchers. The research materials thus acquired are housed in the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago, which administers the program and sends out the films to member libraries, which borrow them as needed by their faculty and students."

Fortunately, I do have a copy with me of the check-list of issues of Seara that I composed from the incomplete set held at the Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa in 1980, so I should be able to check that off fairly quickly.

Apart from the other tasks mentioned above, I shall continue for the time being with the Boletim da Provincia de Macau e Timor. I expect the amount of Timor material in the BPMT to be considerable up until 1896, when Timor became an Autonomous District directly responsible to Lisbon, and I may find that there is a reasonable amount in the BPMT up to 1912 when forces were sent to Timor to help put down an almost general war.

There is still so much to do, and my time here is fast running out. On present plans, I should be back in Darwin in mid-July of this year, but I could make much use of the extra time if I were able to afford to stay on until mid-October, which is just before my passport runs out.

The Director of the Arquivo Histórico de Macau, Doutora Beatriz O. Basto da Silva, resigned a couple of weeks ago. Her Deputy, Doutora Maria dos Anjos Morais, is at present the Acting Director. The AHM is expected to be closed some time this year for renovations, probably sooner than later, but they hope to have a warning of the date of closure at least a couple of months before the fact. Depending on what I am working on at the time, it is possible that it need not interrupt my work. If it does, I shall still have plenty of things to do at the Diocesan Archive and National Library.

On a more personal level, the weather is getting warmer — thank goodness! The Hotel Bela Vista is currently completely rewiring, from 110v to 220v, and, as the wiring is being concealed, replastering and repainting as they go. I shall have to change rooms for a couple of days within the next fortnight while they do my room.

One last note for anyone who may be interested in an English-language history of Macau. Oxford University Press, Hong Kong, has just (1984) issued a facsimile of Historic Macao, by C.A. Montalto de Jesus. The First Edition came out in 1902, and was greeted with acclaim. However, the Second Edition, revised and enlarged, printed in Macau in 1926, was siezed by the Government and burned in public. People who had purchased copies were ordered to surrender them for destruction. It is not known how many copies survived. The author had suggested that Portugal knew and cared little about Macau, and was incompetent in meeting its needs. The facsimile is of the Second Edition. I would suggest that the National Library of Australia procure a copy if there is not one already in the Braga Collection from Macau.

One further last note. There are no complete sets left for sale of the Boletim do Instituto Luís de Camões, Macau, but the AHM has kindly given me copies of the 12 issues which were still available.

Macau, March 1984.

Kevin Sherlock